



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Thursday - December 12, 2002

- ***In the West***, beneficial rain and snow showers continue across winter wheat areas of the ***Northwest*** and in adjacent mountain areas from the ***Cascades to the northern Rockies***. Mild, breezy weather prevails elsewhere in the region.
- ***On the Plains***, mild, dry weather favors overwintering wheat. However, much of the winter wheat on the ***northern and central High Plains*** remains exposed to potential weather extremes.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, mild, dry weather is returning to the ***Ohio Valley***, allowing the region to recover from Wednesday's ice storm. Elsewhere in the ***Corn Belt***, mild, dry conditions favor off-season fieldwork.
- ***In the South***, locally heavy showers and thunderstorms are returning to the saturated ***western Gulf Coast region***, threatening additional lowland flooding. Fieldwork delays persist elsewhere in the ***South***, including the ***Delta*** and the ***southern Atlantic region***, due to wet field conditions.

Outlook: Another storm developing along the ***Gulf Coast*** will produce moderate to heavy rainfall in the ***Southeast***. As the storm intensifies on Friday and moves northeastward, rain will spread into the ***Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern States***. Heavy snow will be possible in the ***upper Ohio Valley*** and higher elevations of the ***Appalachians***. Meanwhile in the ***West***, periods of rain and snow are likely from the ***Pacific Northwest*** southward into ***northern California***. However, dry, unseasonably warm weather will persist on the ***Plains***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for December 17-21 calls for below-normal precipitation on the ***northern Plains*** and in the ***Rio Grande Valley***, while above-normal precipitation is forecast across the remainder of the U.S. Above-normal temperatures are expected across ***central and eastern U.S.***, while below-normal temperatures are forecast in the ***Southwest***.

Contact: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-2397)